

**Korean Studies Frankfurt  
2nd Online International  
Summer School**

**Discovering  
North Korea**

**July 29 - August 2, 2024**

Korean Studies  
Goethe University Frankfurt  
Frankfurt am Main  
Germany

**Welcome to the 2nd Online International Summer School Program “*Discovering North Korea*” organized by Korean Studies at Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany!**

**We hope the participation in this program enables you to discover new topics within the field of North Korean Studies and broaden your understanding on how to explore the country in an academic context.**

**Over the course of 5 days, a total of 10 interesting lectures featuring the following topics awaits you:**

- North Korean Studies as a Research Field
- The Geography of North Korea
- Labor, Reconstruction and Life in Postwar North Korea
- North Korea’s Recent Foreign Policy
- Experiences of North Korean Refugee Doctors in South Korea
- The Women of North Korea
- North Korean Performing Arts
- North Korean Sports at International Stages
- Challenges to Human rights in North Korea
- Humanitarian assistance in North Korea

# Program Schedule

# Day 1

*Monday, July 29, 10:00AM CEST*

## North Korean Studies as a Research Field

Is it possible to study North Korea at all, considering the dearth of reliable quantitative data and the near absence of field work access? Does it make sense to make North Korea the focus of a term paper, a BA or MA thesis, or even the center of your future career? What do you need to consider before doing so? What are the ethical challenges of researching a system that is under such heavy criticism for its human rights record and its nuclear weapons program? Will you at some point even be yourself affected by international and bilateral sanctions, or become the object of a cyber attack? These and other questions will be discussed by a researcher who has been in this field for more than three decades.



### **Rüdiger Frank | University of Vienna**

Dr. Rüdiger Frank is Professor of East Asian Economy and Society ([ecos.univie.ac.at](http://ecos.univie.ac.at)) at the University of Vienna and the founder and director of the European Centre for North Korean Studies ([ecnk.univie.ac.at](http://ecnk.univie.ac.at)). He holds degrees in Korean Studies, International Relations, and Economics. His first visit to North Korea was in 1991-1992 as a language student at Kim Il Sung University in Pyongyang, followed by many more visits until 2018. He has worked with the World Economic Forum on Korea for over a decade. His latest books on North Korea are "Nordkorea: Innenansichten eines totalen Staates" and "Unterwegs in Nordkorea: Eine Gratwanderung". He tweets as @RFrankVienna.

# Day 1

*Monday, July 29, 01:00PM CEST*

## **Geographies and Landscapes of North Korea**

This lecture explores the importance and use of geographies, landscapes and terrains to North Korea. From topographies which form key participants in its charismatic histories, to environments and ecologies of the future, this lecture considers spaces such as North Korea's fish farms, its forests and mountains and its soils and earths and their enmeshing within its politics.

### **Robert Winstanley-Chesters | University of Edinburgh**

Robert is an AKS Teaching and Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. Robert's PhD thesis from the University of Leeds (2013) was titled *Ideology and the Production of Landscape in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*. Robert is the author of the monographs *Environment, Politics and Ideology in North Korea* (Lexington, 2014), *Vibrant Matter(s): Fish, Fishing and Community in North Korea and Her Neighbours* (Springer, 2020) and *New Goddess on Mt Paektu: Myth and Transformation in North Korean Landscape* (Black Halo/Amazon KDP, 2020). Robert is currently researching North Korea necro-mobilities and other difficult or unwelcome bodies and materials in Korea/East Asian historical geography, as well as the processes and landscapes of geographic knowledge production, fieldwork and theory during the Japanese Imperial and Korean colonial era.



# Day 2

*Tuesday, July 30, 10:00AM CEST*

## **Postwar North Korea: Labor, Reconstruction, Everyday Life**

This session is focused on North Korea in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950-1953). In particular, we consider the emergence of labor as the primary way of organizing society, the translational process of rebuilding North Korea's major cities, and the remaking of everyday life based on the hegemonic authority of the worker.



### **Cheehyung Harrison Kim | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

Cheehyung Harrison Kim is an associate professor in the Department of History at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. His research and teaching focus on socialism, labor, industrialism, everyday life, and urbanism in the context of East Asia and North Korea. He is the author of *Heroes and Toilers: Work as Life in Postwar North Korea, 1953-1961* published by Columbia University Press. He is also the editor of the journal *Korean Studies*.

# Day 2

*Tuesday, July 30, 01:00PM CEST*

## **Conflicting Aims in North Korea's Recent Foreign Policy**

This lecture will explore North Korea's foreign policies under Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un. Locked in a perennial competition with the ROK and facing increasing international isolation, the DPRK leaders have pursued several aims in tandem. They strove to gain political and economic support from their traditional partners (China and Russia), drive a wedge between their allied opponents (South Korea, Japan, and the U.S.), and acquire a nuclear weapons capability for purposes of deterrence and intimidation. Yet these three aims were not necessarily compatible with each other. A policy of nuclear intimidation could easily undercut the policies of alliance-building and bloc-splitting, while efforts to rebuild ties with Beijing and Moscow ran the risk of reinforcing, rather than weakening, the trilateral partnership between Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington unless Pyongyang showed readiness to make at least some nuclear concessions. Under such conditions, the DPRK had little, if any, chance of successfully pursuing all three aims at the same time, whereas a strategy exclusively focused on a single aim could potentially restrict its room for maneuver. Thus, North Korean policy-makers usually opted for a combination of two aims, laying less emphasis on the third one for a shorter or longer period.

### **Balázs Szalontai | Korea University**

Balázs Szalontai is a historian and author of *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era: Soviet-DPRK Relations and the Roots of North Korean Despotism, 1953-1964*, published by Stanford University Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press in 2005. His publications on North Korea's foreign policies have appeared in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, *Journal of Northeast Asian History*, *Korea Journal*, *North Korean Review*, *Seoul Journal of Korean Studies*, and *S/N Korean Humanities*. He holds a PhD from Central European University (Budapest, Hungary), and teaches at Korea University's Sejong Campus. His current research is focused on North Korea's political, military, and economic interactions with the Middle East and North Africa.



# Day 3

Wednesday, July 31, 10:00AM CEST

## From *Jeongseong* to *Jangmadang*: Cultural and Professional Adjustment of North Korean Refugee Doctors in South Korea

North Korean refugee physicians experienced sociocultural challenges in adjusting to the capitalistic South Korean healthcare system, establishing their identities as professionals in transitional contexts. The older generation of refugee doctors came under the influence of the jeongseong undong (Devotion Movement) in North Korea, which directed physicians to care for patients with sacrificial sincerity. However, prolonged economic hardship fundamentally transformed the patient-doctor relationship in North Korea. Those who were older and of high rank in medical society suffered more despair and hardship, which resulted in their initial resistance to adjustment in South Korean society due to legacies of the Devotion Movement. In contrast, the younger generation of North Korean refugee physicians strived to assimilate into the South Korean medical society.



### Young Su Park | Seoul National University

Young Su Park is a physician anthropologist and Assistant Professor at the Department of the History of Medicine and Medical Humanities at Seoul National University. His scholarship speaks to critical approaches to global health, climate crisis, trauma and mental health, reproductive health, and genealogy of modernities in Africa. He undertook ethnographic fieldworks on South Korean global health projects in Ethiopia. Previously, he was a postdoctoral researcher at Freie Universität Berlin and University College London, and Assistant Professor in Health Studies at Haverford College. Dr. Park received his PhD in Anthropology (Culture and Society track) at Stanford University in 2018.

# Day 3

*Wednesday, July 31, 01:00PM CEST*

## The Women of North Korea

The most transformative changes shaping North Korean government and society are taking place on the ground in the everyday lives and these changes have a pronounced gender dimension. In short women are destabilising two fundamental pillars of North Korea – socialism and deep-rooted patriarchy.

This lecture will review North Korean regime law and policy's as they relate to women and discuss:

- the role of women in the emergence of these markets and the unique characteristics of women's entrepreneurship in North Korea
- changes in human relations, expression of private desire and sexual norms and breakdown of the traditional patriarchal family
- changing modes of consumption and transformation of beauty standards, fashion, self-presentation and care
- the regime's response to new values of women and the jangmadang generation

### **Bronwen Dalton | University of Technology Sydney**

Professor Bronwen Dalton (D.Phil. Oxon) is the Head of the Department of Management and the Director of the Masters of Not-for-Profit and Social Enterprise Program at the University of Technology, Sydney. Bronwen was chief investigator on the Australia Research Council funded project, North Korea's Quiet Transformation: Women in the Rise of the Informal Market – the first major research project to investigate the role played by women in the emergence of a nascent capitalist economy in North Korea. She has had a long association with South Korea – first living there as an exchange student and then completing her Masters at Yonsei University. She speaks Korean and visits South Korea annually. She has been to North Korea three times.





# Day 4

*Thursday, August 1, 10:00AM CEST*

## **North Korean Performing Arts in the North and Transnational Space**

This lecture introduces the divergent performance cultures shaped in North Korea from the time of the partitioning of the Korean Peninsula to the present day. Dr. Sunhee Koo utilizes sound examples and audio-visual clips to illustrate how the two Koreas have developed distinct cultural expressions, influenced by contrasting state ideologies and cultural imperatives that have defined the Korean Peninsula over the past seventy years. She then focuses on North Korea's unique construction and utilization of performance cultures to reinforce state power while suppressing emotional expression and topics related to everyday life. Finally, she exemplifies how North Korean music and dance acquire new meanings through shifting performance contexts within a transnational cultural framework.



### **Sunhee Koo | The University of Auckland**

Sunhee Koo is a senior lecturer in ethnomusicology and chair of anthropology at Waipapa Taumata Rau, The University of Auckland, New Zealand. Her research centers on East Asian performing arts, delving into the intricate dynamics of ethnicity, nation, and identity. Drawing from her ethnographic study on Korean migrations in Northeast Asia, she has published in esteemed journals such as the *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Korean Studies*, *Asian Music*, and the *Yearbook for Traditional Music*. In 2021, her first monograph, *Sound of the Border: Music and Identity of the Korean Minority in China*, was published by the University of Hawai'i Press. Her second monograph project is currently underway, contracted with the same esteemed press.

# Day 4

*Thursday, August 1, 01:00PM CEST*

## **North Korean Sports on an International Platform: Identity, Ideology and Idiosyncrasy**

In North Korea, sport often works as a useful propaganda machine and diplomatic instrument. This lecture concerns the demonstration of the DPRK's nationalism through sport and the exploitation of sport as its foreign policy tools. In this talk, I first introduce a brief political history of North Korean sports. Then, I discuss the performance of DPRK athletes at international competitions and the representation of North Korean national identity through the episode of international sporting success. I also look at how sport can be used as a vehicle for disseminating DPRK's political ideology to both domestic and international audiences. Moreover, the role of sport in building a bridge between North and South Korea is critically examined here. Based on these investigations the idiosyncratic nature of sport in the DPRK can be understood.

### **Jung Woo Lee | University of Edinburgh**

Jung Woo Lee is a political sociologist, and his research interest lies in sports diplomacy and international relations. He is the founding research director of the Scottish Centre for Olympic Research and Education at the University of Edinburgh. Also, he is a non-residential fellow of the European Centre for North Korea Studies at the University of Vienna and a guest module leader at German Sport University Cologne where he teaches a course on the Olympics and international relations. Dr Lee recently edited *Sport Mega-Event in Asia* (2023, Palgrave) and is an editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Sport and Politics* (2017). His work on sport and global politics is frequently quoted by international media such as CNN, BBC and Le Monde.



# Day 5

*Friday, August 2, 10:00AM CEST*

## **Human rights in North Korea and the challenge of accountability**

This lecture will discuss the human rights situation in North Korea 10 years on from the UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in the DPRK. I will focus on the work of civil society organisations and activists who have worked to raise awareness and call for accountability. Drawing on my previous work for a human rights documentation NGO in Seoul as well as my subsequent academic research, I will share insights on the various methods used to understand the human rights situation in North Korea, as well as the role of victims in both documentation and activism aimed at calling for accountability. I will discuss the various judicial and non-judicial interpretations of accountability, as well as the many challenges to making accountability a reality.



### **Sarah Son | University of Sheffield**

Dr Sarah Son is a Senior Lecturer and researcher in Korean Studies, specialising in contemporary North and South Korean society, politics and international relations. She is Director of the University of Sheffield's Centre for Korean Studies and the current President of the British Association for Korean Studies. She has published research on inter-Korean relations, settlement policy for North Korean refugees, human rights documentation and accountability for North Korean human rights violations, as well as South Korean representations of North Korea in popular culture. She has consulted widely with external stakeholders in inter-Korean affairs including the United Nations and the UK's All Party Parliamentary Group for North Korea.

# Day 5

*Friday, August 2, 01:00PM CEST*

## **Humanitarian assistance in North Korea: Actors, Aid relationships and Institutions**

Following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) government's appeal for international assistance in 1995, a wide range of aid actors provided humanitarian and 'light' development assistance to North Korea. The complex nature of a largely functioning but repressive state, limited capacities to deal with a protracted humanitarian crisis and the regime's constant weighing of risks versus benefits shaped the space in which humanitarian assistance was provided and aid relationships developed. The decades-long interaction between the DPRK government and international aid actors has mainly been examined from the angle of institutional constraints such as strict state control, domestic regulations, restrictions of access to vulnerable groups and limited availability of data as well as international sanctions. While these factors continued to impact on the aid organisations' activities, at least until the Covid-19 pandemic when the DPRK closed its borders and humanitarian actors left, this session also discusses aid relationships and institutions that developed over time.

### **Sabine Burghart | University of Turku**

Dr. Sabine Burghart is University Lecturer and Academic Director of the Master's Degree Programme in East Asian Studies at the University of Turku in Finland. Before joining the Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS) in Turku, she was lecturer and researcher at the Department of East Asian Studies of the University of Vienna. Between 2018 and 2021, she was also a co-researcher at the Goethe University Frankfurt. Her current research interests concern foreign aid, institutions and ownership in development partnerships. She spent more than five years of her professional career in Korea, and facilitated various capacity building projects and three EU-DPRK workshops in North Korea.



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